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1994 HOLIDAY SEASON MESSAGES

President William J. Clinton, Secretary of Defense William J. Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John M. Shalikashvili have issued the following messages to members of the Armed Forces in observance of the Holiday Season:

PRESIDENT CLINTON

Each year during the holiday season, Americans celebrate the promise of renewal and the possibilities of peace. The dedicated efforts of our Armed Forces enable us to enjoy these rich blessings, and I am honored to salute all those who wear our country's uniform.

The hundreds of thousands of American soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who are stationed around the world are a beacon of hope to those striving to overcome hardship and oppression. Your actions have helped ease the suffering of millions both at home and abroad -- from Rwanda to Bosnia to Haiti. I urge all Americans to recognize the sacrifices you have made for the causes of democracy and human dignity.

As we celebrate this holy time of year, I offer special thanks to those of you who cannot be with your loved ones. Your friends, families and fellow Americans are proud of your devotion to your country and to the defense of liberty. I extend my deepest gratitude to the thousands of American service members who work to preserve our country's security while keeping the peace around the world. You are truly a testament to America's greatness.

Hillary and I wish you all the best for the coming year.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY

I'm very pleased at this most joyous of seasons to have this opportunity to say a few words to American's soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. In this year especially, your service has brought new hopes that people throughout the world will receive the promise of peace this season.

As we look back over this year, your list of humanitarian contributions is long. You have brought food and water to starving people in Europe and Africa. You have lent a helping hand to those in the Caribbean seeking freedom, provided comfort for the Kurds in Northern Iraq,

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accomplished successful missions over Bosnia, and all the while you have stood guard over the security of our homeland.

These many and varied missions have taken some of you far away. Many of you will observe this holiday season away from your families, friends and home. But you should know that you are in the thoughts of Americans everywhere at this season. They know of your contributions to securing the way of life all of us hold so dear.

I'd like to say a special word to the families of our military. Your contributions are no less than the contributions of those who wear the country's uniform. While your sons and daughters, husbands and wives are about the nation's business far from home, your support is vital to their success. I'm pleased to relay the nation's thanks to you.

May God grant you every blessing in the new year. Happy holidays to all of you.

GEN. JOHN M. SHALIKASHVILI

As 1994 draws to a close, take a moment to reflect on a momentous year of worldwide involvement for our military forces. You have given much of yourselves. Although these traditional holidays are times of great festivity, their deeper meanings are found in the messages of renewal, hope, salvation and deliverance.

Each of you -- active duty, reserve component, civilian and family members -- has played an integral part in giving the greatest gifts possible to the family of man around the globe. You have presented gifts of peace, promise and, in many situations, life itself to countless millions. You have paid for them with your unequalled dedication, selfless sacrifice and boundless energy.

To cite a few examples of what you have done in 1994, you began the year still in Somalia, offering a people torn by civil strife an opportunity to grasp a future; you were involved in Bosnia-Herzegovina, protecting the innocent and feeding the hungry; and you were shielding oppressed minorities in Northern and Southern Iraq. As the year progressed, you turned a rapidly emerging disaster in Rwanda around, stopping disease and starvation in its tracks; you rescued tens of thousands Haitians and Cubans who took to the sea to escape from despotism in their countries; you returned the legitimately elected government of the Haitian people to its rightful place; and you rushed back to Kuwait to reinsure the victory won three years ago in Operation Desert Storm. Some of these challenges are behind us now -- others are still with us and even more are ahead.

Many of you will be with loved ones this holiday season. For those deployed or on watch away from your families, I hope your joyous time together will come very soon.

To all of you who are serving your Nation and mankind so well, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I extend sincere thanks for your dedicated, untiring service. Be proud of the part you have played and continue to play. The peace, good will, security and hope for a brighter future that you provide are among those things most cherished by your fellow man.

May this holiday season bring each of you and your families the richest of blessings and joy. God Bless.

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